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RECENT LITERATURE.

A Popular Botany.¹—This pretty book professes to enable one who has never studied botany to have a “bowing acquaintance” with the common wild flowers, certainly a most laudable undertaking. The author appears to have fallen largely under the baleful influence of the old-fashioned teachers of botany, characterized not inaptly by the line she quotes from Emerson—

“And all their botany is Latin names”

which may account for the impression she has that a scientific arrangement or even a “key” must be repellant to the amateur, or “bristling with technical terms and outlandish titles.” This book is an honest effort to bring some knowledge of plants nearer to the non-botanical man and woman who may have a natural love of the flowers of the wayside and fields.

At the opening of the book are a few pages devoted to the explanation of terms, in which we find what is so common in popular works—that many of the definitions do not define. There is a woful mixing up of physiological with structural definitions, which must prove as troublesome to the amateur who has a horror of technical terms which “bristle,” or of titles which are “outlandish.” How much help will the reader get from this definition?—“The Stamens are the fertilizing organs of the flower.” Some of the definitions are good enough, and will, perhaps, serve their purpose.

The “Flower Descriptions” are grouped under six heads, viz.: White, Yellow, Pink, Red, Blue and Purple, Miscellaneous. This part is pretty well done, and includes descriptions and many good illustrations of the more striking common flowers of the region within one or two hundred miles of New York City. The provincialism of the book is shown in its title, where the flowers of this limited region are called “*our* common wild flowers,” and again on page X, where we find the expression, “this side of Chicago,” which makes one ask where is “this side?” The title should be changed so as to restrict the book to the New England and Middle States, in which region it will be a useful book for amateurs. The author should remember that there are “common wild flowers” and multitudes of people who admire them in the South, upon the prairies and plains, in the Rocky Mountains, and in the States of the Pacific Coast. “Our common wild flowers” is an

¹ “How to Know the Wild Flowers.” A guide to the names, haunts, and habits of our common wild flowers, by Mrs. William Starr Dana; illustrated by Marion Satterlee; small, 8vo, 298 pp. New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1893.

expression with a very different meaning in different parts of the country.—CHARLES E. BESSEY.

Two Text-Books of Physiology.²—The State of Indiana has gone into the business of loaning its name as endorsing certain text-books, which are published as the "Indiana State Series." These two books, by Professor Jenkins, now of the Leland Stanford University, belong to the series. Of the advantages and disadvantages of such a course, much might be said; but for this we have no room aside from the remark that in our opinion the disadvantages far outweigh the greatest advantages gained—the publication of the books at reasonable rates, the prices of the two volumes being fixed by law at thirty and sixty cents respectively.

Dr. Jenkins has done his work well in both volumes, the "Advanced" work being the better of the two—the "Primary" being too old in its style for the students for which it is intended. In each work there is a freshness of style and a logical arrangement which please us, and the greatest fault we can find with the work is the insertion of "review questions" which were doubtless demanded by the publishers (we might say parenthetically that Professor Martin's otherwise excellent "Human Body, Briefer Course," is damaged by the same operation.) Especially admirable is the treatment of the use of alcoholic stimulants, narcotics, and the like. There is no lurid description of the drunkard's stomach, no intemperate use of adjectives, but rather a plain, common-sense view of the matter which will be as effective as the more extravagant statements so common in the suppression of intemperance. In short, we regard these books as among the very best for schools of the grammar and high school grades, and can but wish that they might supplant, in other States than Indiana, the trashy works so commonly in use.

Calderwood on Mental Evolution.³—This octavo of 350 pages is written with the object of harmonizing the modern doctrine of evolution or physical continuity, with the doctrine of non-continuity of mental evolution, so far as regards man. The author endeavors to show that while the physical structure of man may have been the result of an evolutionary process, his mind presents too great a differ-

² O. P. Jenkins. Primary lessons in human physiology. Indianapolis, 1891, pp. 211.

O. P. Jenkins. Advanced lessons in human physiology. Indianapolis, 1891, pp. 318.

³ Evolution and Man's Place in Nature, by Henry Calderwood, LL.D., Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh. Macmillan & Co., 1893.